



**State Representative
Arthur J. O'Neill**

Dear Friend,

It continues to be an honor and a privilege to serve as the state representative for the 69th District in the House of Representatives.

This Annual Report covers the state budget, and a number of critical issues that were addressed by the legislature during the 2006 session.

As always, if you have any questions or comments concerning the 2006 session, please contact my office at any time.

Sincerely,



Representative Arthur J. O'Neill, Ranking Member of the Budget-Writing Appropriations Committee, addresses the media at a press conference.



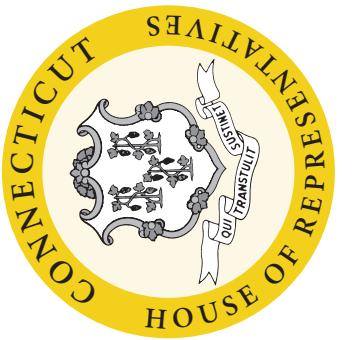
State Representative

ARTHUR J. O'NEILL

Proudly Serving the 69th District

Bridgewater ★ Roxbury ★ Southbury ★ Washington

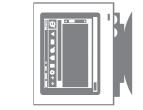
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2006 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



**State Representative
ARTHUR J. O'NEILL
Proudly Serving the 69th District**

Bridgewater ★ Roxbury ★ Southbury ★ Washington



State Representative Arthur J. O'Neill

2006 Annual Legislative Report



WORKING FOR OUR INTERESTS

The State Budget

My second year as Ranking Member of the budget-writing Appropriations Committee was both challenging and rewarding. The General Assembly approved a \$16 billion state budget that represented a compromise between Legislative Democrats and Governor M. Jodi Rell and legislative Republicans.

The deal includes a phased-out repeal of the corporate surcharge, which many of my colleagues and I have fought for since the beginning of the legislative session. It also includes a number of tax cuts for business which will help improve the economy and increase jobs in the state, such as a phase out of the property tax on machinery and equipment.

We also increased deposits in the Rainy Day Fund from the Democrats' proposed \$39 million to \$190 million, which boosts the fund to \$800 million. The budget deal also fully funds the Teachers' Pension Fund, which has been repeatedly shortchanged by majority Democrats to fuel other spending projects. The final budget also is under the constitutionally mandated spending cap in both years.

Transportation

The traffic congestion Connecticut has endured not only creates annoying commutes, but it kills jobs and the economy. This year the General Assembly committed \$2.3 billion to expand rail services and improve Connecticut's highways and roads.

Shepaug River

State funds were approved this year to implement a settlement between Waterbury and the towns of Washington and Roxbury to ensure adequate flow of water down the Shepaug River especially during dry spells. \$3.5 million will be used to install pumps, restructure reservoir gates, and install a new gauging station.

For Seniors/Veterans/Healthcare

A new law allows towns to freeze property taxes on homes owned by people age 70 or older. Homeowner-companion agencies must now register with the Department of Consumer Protection and employees must undergo background checks. Legislation will protect jobs and finances of National Guard members who are called up for state service such as a natural disasters, just as they would if called up for national service. The legislature updated Connecticut law on end of life decisions, hospital-acquired infections and umbilical cord blood banking.



Rep. O'Neill and other legislators welcomed the 2005 New England Pop Warner Pee Wee Football Champion Pomperaug Warriors and their coaches to the State House of Representatives.

Protecting Open Space

This year I supported a measure that requires the State Department of Environmental Protection to conduct an environmental review of unneeded state land if it may have significant natural resources or a public recreational value. Based on that review, the commissioner may recommend that any transfer contain restrictions or conditions, or that a conservation easement be granted. This legislation provides an opportunity to recapture certain parcels of state land which may have been previously identified as without use, and preserve and protect them if they have value.

The Cost of Energy

With a 22% increase on ratepayers having been implemented this year, and power consumers continuing to be gouged by rising costs, the legislative majority blocked a proposal by House Republicans that would reduce the public utilities gross earning tax on electric and power companies. The proposal, which would have saved ratepayers roughly \$60 million annually was defeated on a party-line vote. There were also attempts to address the spiking cost of gasoline including a temporary repeal the 25 cents a gallon state gasoline tax between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This proposal was rejected by the majority despite a nearly \$700 million budget surplus.

Medicaid Changes Successful: Money Follows the Person

This year I was successful in obtaining passage of legislation that changes Medicaid regulations and allows the state to apply for federal funds to create a pilot program for long term care at home. This program allows families to stay intact at home while receiving quality care, and saves the state money.



Rep. O'Neill confers with Rep. Bob Farr on the floor of the House of Representatives.

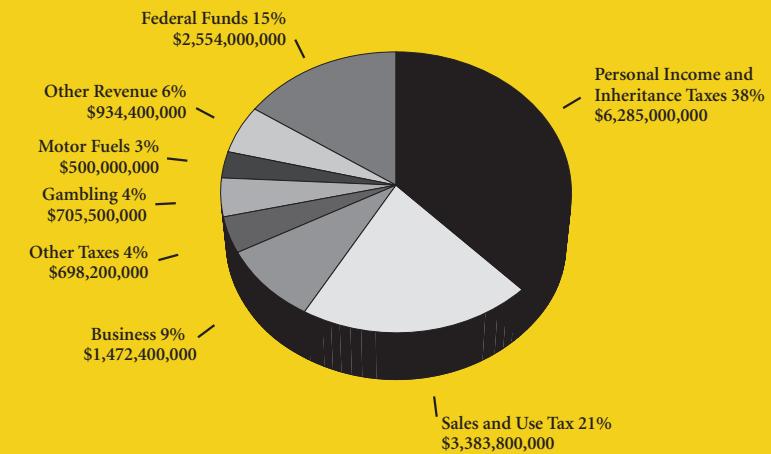
Hospital Acquired Infections

The General Assembly passed legislation that requires hospitals to report hospital acquired infections to the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the department must compile a list of them. Infections obtained at a hospital are more common than one might think. The collection of this data and publication of it can be significant in establishing and identifying infection patterns. This is a critical first step in helping reduce the occurrence of such infections.

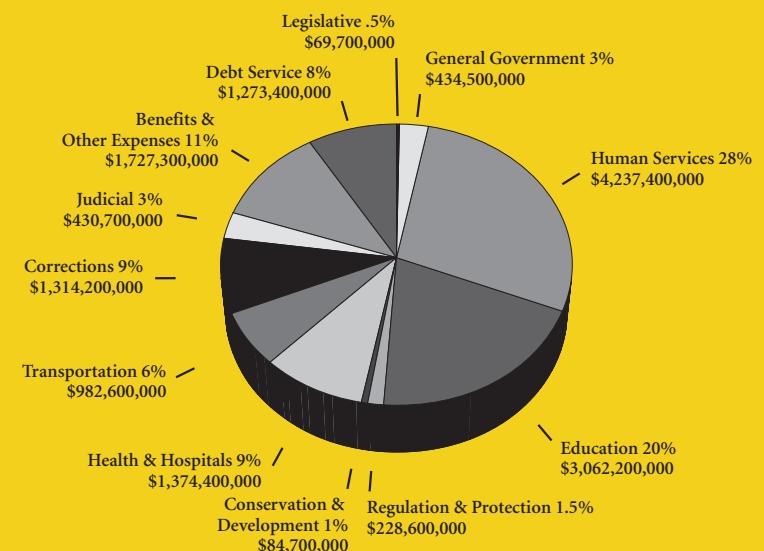
BUDGET ENDING JUNE 30, 2006

The 2006 general fund and the special transportation fund spends \$15.2 billion.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?



WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?



**In addition to an expected surplus, the difference between expenditures and revenues is due to tax refunds.*